

KCRA CH3

GOP Lawmaker Speaks Out After Mass. Election

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SACRAMENTO, Calif. -- GOP Rep. Dan Lungren said Monday he hopes President Barack Obama will step back and take a different approach to health care reform after a Republican was elected to a Massachusetts U.S. Senate seat held by Democrats for decades.

Lungren said he was surprised to see Republican Scott Brown beat Democrat Martha Coakley Tuesday a race for the seat formerly held by Ted Kennedy, who died last year. "Thirty days out, no one really thought this was going to happen," said Lungren, a Gold River Republican and frequent critic of Obama.

"Even on election night, I hoped it would happen, but I ... didn't want to believe it until it actually occurred." As Obama prepares to give his State of the Union speech Wednesday, Lungren said it would be a mistake for the president to push ahead with his health reform plan as it now stands.

"I think he would be better served ... for himself, for his party and the country if he would say, 'You know, we made a mistake. We realize now that what we are offering is not what the American people are asking for.

"Lungren said Americans want elected officials to pause, take a step back and develop a bipartisan approach to health reform. He also said constituents are very concerned about jobs and economy. The loss of the Massachusetts seat to the GOP broke up the Democrats' filibuster-proof majority in the Senate.